

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 085965

EXDIS - CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PCAT, UNSC, IS, XF

SUBJECT: ISRAELI COMPLIANCE WITH SOUTH AFRICAN ARMS
EMBARGO

REF: TEL AVIV 2936

1. ACCORDING TO OUR LATEST INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION
(WHICH SHOULD NOT BE SHARED WITH ISRAELIS), THIRD RESHEF
CLASS FRIGATE IS NOW TO BE DELIVERED TO SOUTH AFRICANS
AT END OF APRIL. DELAY IN DELIVERY IS APPARENTLY A
RESULT OF CERTAIN TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WHICH WE UNDERSTAND
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ARE NOW BEING RESOLVED. AS IN CASE OF PREVIOUS
DELIVERIES, WE SHOULD ASSUME THAT SOVIETS, AMONG OTHERS,
WILL BE AWARE OF TURNOVER OF THIS VESSEL AND WILL BE
PREPARED TO USE THIS INFORMATION AGAINST ISRAELIS AT
APPROPRIATE MOMENT. SECONDLY, ORGANIZATIONAL PHASE OF
UNITED NATIONS SOUTH AFRICAN ARMS EMBARGO WATCHDOG
COMMITTEE IS PRACTICALLY COMPLETED, AND WE ANTICIPATE

THAT RULES OF PROCEDURE WILL BE ADOPTED AT INFORMAL MEETING ON APRIL 5. KUWAITI PERMREP BISHARA HAS BEEN APPOINTED CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE FOR 1978, AND WE ASSUME THAT HE WILL BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN BRINGING TO LIGHT EXISTING ISRAELI LINKS WITH SOUTH AFRICA IN THE ARMS AREA.

2. ASSUME EMBASSY AGREES THAT GOI CAN HAVE NO DOUBT ABOUT US POSITION ON CONTINUING ISRAELI VIOLATIONS OF ARMS EMBARGO, AND THAT ISRAEL WILL NOT THEREFORE EXPECT US SUPPORT IN SECURITY COUNCIL. SHOULD YOU BELIEVE IT USEFUL, HOWEVER, YOU MAY WISH TO FIND OCCASION TO MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) US SECURITY COUNCIL'S WATCHDOG COMMITTEE ON SOUTH AFRICAN ARMS EMBARGO IS ABOUT TO BEGIN OPERATIONS. UNDER KUWAITI CHAIRMAN (FOR REMAINDER OF 1978) ISRAELIS SHOULD BE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS AS TO LIKELIHOOD THAT COMMITTEE WILL OVERLOOK THEIR ONGOING ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

B) GOI IS AWARE OF OUR INTERPRETATION OF SC RESOLUTION 418, WHICH NOW APPEARS TO BE UNIVERSALLY HELD WITH CHANGE (USUN 922) IN SWEDISH POSITION.

C) UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT IS VERY DIFFICULT
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TO SEE HOW ISRAEL'S FRIENDS, INCLUDING THE US, WILL BE ABLE TO DEFEND HER WHEN THIS ISSUE INEVITABLY COMES BEFORE THE WATCHDOG COMMITTEE.

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